



30 April 09 — Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen gives his respect in return to greetings by workers at the Sihanoukville Sea Port (Kampuchea Thmei)

30 April 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Gathering Port Workers at the Sihanoukville

It is indeed my pleasure and honor to come back to meet you all once again in the Autonomous Port of Sihanoukville after we met last year on May 1, which was at the end of the third legislature of the National Assembly ... Today our meeting is taking place at the time that I am the Prime Minister of Cambodia in the fourth legislature of the National Assembly after the general elections in July 2008.

... On behalf of Samdech Chea Sim and Samdech Heng Sarin and leaders of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), I would like to convey our sincere thanks to workers as well as their families for voting for CPP, which once again brings me here on the 123rd anniversary of the International Labor Day ...

How come I did not choose to come here on May 1, which is tomorrow? Tomorrow

will be the first day of sub-national council electoral campaigns - that is why I have to come here one day before. I would first of all like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the governing council of the Port as well as General Directors and workers for the efforts they made in the past aimed at making the Port an important entrance and exit point of trades in and out ...

Achievements have been illustrated in the report by HE Tram Iv Toek, Minister of Transports and Public Works by which there is a clear contrast of increased volume of trades in and out through this Port ... I have been here to put into use many facilities from stage 1 and stage 2 and I also came last year to put into official use the building through which we operate one window service and this year I
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28 April 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Tertiary and French Language Teachers Graduation

I have great pleasure to be present once again at the National Institute for Education (NIE) for this solemn occasion of graduations but I also would like to ask for your understanding that my wife could not make it to this ceremony for a minor health problem. It is a great pleasure to be here once more. For some graduates, graduates as teacher trainees and on-going pedagogical students, we might have met more than one time in the course of your studies.

Let me take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the National Institute for Education

(NIE) for the effort in sustaining its works from the time it was a University of Pedagogy to presently the National Institute for Education. For thirty years NIE has been serving as a center for teacher training. I have mentioned already that I used to be here in the initial stage to give lectures. We did not have electricity and lecturing at night depended on a small electric generator.

As you know we are now in a different state. Though a few old buildings are still here but many new ones have sprung up. This is also because we have to preserve
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06 April 2009 (Unofficial Translation)
The Fifth Asia Economic Forum — Selected Comments

In addition to the prepared text Samdech Techo Hun Sen made following comments relating to local economic development and its status, millennium development goals, and China as regional and world economic power, etc.

There was this economic intelligence group who once predicted Cambodian income to have lost 75% while only 25% was left and it was the same team that wrote and requested for an audience with me. I find it incredible even in family level that 75% of its income has been depleted by their children in anyway and the family is still doing fine. The country's

economy is emerging in a growth rate of about 10% five consecutive years, where 10.4% was the highest in 2005, Cambodia was at that time predicted to be 1.6% or 1.7% growth country. You know what, we did 13.3%. Because of this fact-missing assessment of the Cambodian economy, I do not know how to respect their intelligence ...

Cambodia has been classified according to their reading similar to those countries of
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am here for the last part of development plan with the loans we asked from the Government of Japan ...

Today we use the loan of about US\$ 24 million to equip the Port with lifting machines that will improve its loading and discharging capabilities and eight container carrier trucks ... and I would say as I see they could use in transporting artilleries as well ...

As it is now difficult to find ZIL 131, maybe to my mind, if there is a need, we can use these container carriers to load and transport our 130 and 152 mm artilleries. It can be used for as platform trucks in transporting tanks also ...

That is if we have to go to war, but now they are being used for civilian purposes. We do not have a war to fight anymore and we do not go to war with anyone but our military officials have raised this issue as their concerns. One official raised this idea of using container carrier trucks to do the job and it is a good idea ...

Now let's get back to automation of a computerized control system which is known to be risk management area as well as the whole Port operation ... We have spent 24 million dollars and the money is the loan from Japan ...

Let me now say a few things in relations to the project of developing the Port ... In between 1994 and 1995, if we were a bit slow the Port would have changed hands because of what is termed "investment" ... But I have been firm on this that I do not let it out and I hinted that if

you want to find financial help from Japan for developing the Port, it has to be kept free of private hands ...

There had indeed been requests from everywhere for the Port development and everyone seems to have promised a budget of billions of US dollars and I just thought to myself if they have that much why do they want an old Port and not to build a new one. The Japanese money actually came to Phnom Penh already, but because there was private hands in the Port, the money had actually been transferred to the Vientiane airport development project ...

After 20 years, Japan has come back and offered as loan again ... We may ask why Japan did not give us loan earlier than that so that we can have this port developed ... The story has been that Cambodian previous regimes owed Japan money and I can't tell which regimes were there, ... In 1992, Cambodian assistance has been recorded to be high but the country benefits nothing because those money pledges were for paying back Cambodian debts to IMF, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, etc.

As a member of the Supreme National Council (SNC) of Cambodia and Prime Minister of the State of Cambodia, I could see it most of the debt were recorded in the regime of Lon Nol ... Officials suggested selling a plot of land to me so as to pay back the Cambodian debt to ADB, but I refused ... Now the land has gone up sky high by an 18 floor building ...

ADB allowed us to get loan because we had been forced

to borrow money from a private bank to pay back its debt in advance – both in principal and in interest ...

As in the case of Japan, why we could not get loan from 1994 and 1995? It was because Japan demands that we have to pay Japan back the money we owed in both principal and interest including fine. Japan provided Cambodia with goods and Cambodia had to market the goods to get the money pay for Japanese debt but the money has been used to help Cambodia ... I would say an arrow that kills three birds ...

It was 20 years after the liberation and six years after the Paris Peace Agreement that Cambodia was allowed the Japanese loan access ...

Japan has loaned us Yen 4,142 millions or about 38 million US dollars for the first stage of Port development – the container port, to be specific, which cost about Yen 3,916 million ...

For the second stage, we had a second batch of loan of about Yen 4,313 million or about 39 million US dollars from Japan which was signed on December 26, 2004 to extend further the container port and also to equip the Port with necessary machines for loading and discharging services ... which we put into use officially today ...

At the time that we meet here today to put into use this sophisticated equipments I would like to express on behalf of the Royal Government and people of Cambodia, through the Ambassador of Japan, our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government and people of

Japan. More financial commitment on March 20, 2006, a sum of Yen 318 millions or about three million US dollars has been invested in studying an engineering plan for special economic development zone ...

As of this year, we have signed another agreement on March 31, 2008 on a sum of Yen 3,651 million or about 36 million US dollars at the lowest interest rate of 0.01% per annum and we would be glad if Japan could loan us more of the kind.

I would be waiting to see, and I have talked to the Japanese Ambassador already, two things – firstly, timing of commencing the construction of the Special Economic Zone, because it has been signed into agreement since 2006 but has not yet started ... I am so shy of talking about SEZ as it is too special to get off ground ...

If we compare it with the project 1 and 2 in Steong Hav and Prey Nub, which used no state fund, but they have them done, except this one ... That is why I said I will keep my eyes and ears on the timing of commencement of the development site ... The second thing I am waiting to see is which one would attract the most investment ... Let me remind you that the loan has to be paid back in principal and interest and fine would be applied if we fail to pay them back ...

... I would warn the Port about the situation that it may have to operate the Port just to keep the Special Economic Zone going because we now have to start paying interest already and three million US dollars is the cost

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for mapping up the area. My objective is for the Port to operate for own development and not for the SEZ and also for the two to operate in complement to one another ...

Because we have the Port right here, SEZ would benefit from that but if it has taken so long, perhaps other companies have already tapped the benefit elsewhere ...

We may have to depend on the Japanese investments more than anyone else here but because the Japanese have gone mostly to Thailand with their investments, it maybe possible that we may leave the area for football.

This is the only place that we have to borrow money to develop SEZ but it has gone nowhere. Do not take me wrong that I criticize the Government of Japan but as a loan taker I wish to be clear - why so much time has been prolonged? We all want transparency and if we are afraid we would keep this situation going. I will not leave it at that because this is the Cambodian money and Cambodia has the duty to pay them back to the Japanese people. Please move thing fast and do not pay too much time on consultancy ...

Despite the above developments, I think we need to do more in consideration of need for efficiently serving water transportation and in competing with service provided by other Ports in the region ... We say the Port is the only deep sea access in the country but it is so shallow if we compare to others ...

Some ships have to discharge goods to smaller ones to go to the Cambodian sea Port at

Sihanoukville ... What remains to be a major concern for us is to allow big ships traveling directly to our Ports without having to waste time loading and/or discharging goods because of inaccessibility for shallow sea lane ...

We need capital to exhume sand from the sea bed to deepen the shipping lane and there are more than one way to skin the cat for example we have own capital, or from development partners and/or private investment partners ... They may get permission to dredge sand to make the lane deeper and for doing that they may get something in return, etc. What I want to say is how to strengthen Cambodian economic development within the country not just our wish to compete with regional countries ...

HE Tram Iv Toek has mentioned in his report already that all stakeholders in the Port need to be working together in unity – custom officers, police, military police, and the two armed forces will have to join forces in combating tax evasion while getting them to pay and making sound evaluation of real tax value ...

I would warn the fact that there was this case of fixing a value 70% out of 100 so that they can share among themselves the rest. We must guarantee a smooth operation of the Port ...

HE Cham Prasadh should also look into the fact that many requests for developing golf courses but it seems that not many have actually implemented them ...

I would like you to check which company does not implement the project, we

should take back what has been offered, and we keep the deposit fund too ... because we have provided them with like a one or two-year validity already ...

The ANCO clean water has come now in the city and it could provide up to 12,000 cubic meters of clean water per day and only 6000 cubic meters are consumed currently per day ... The left-over half should be running down to other areas like the Port so a running water system should be laid down to cater water to every sectors ... the Koh Puoh is also in need of clean water because no permission is granted for the Koh Puoh investors to drill for water ...

Because today is the 123rd anniversary of the International Labor Day, in Phnom Penh there are 112 factories and enterprises that organize banquets for workers. I wish our workers make further efforts to overcome difficulties in time of world economic crisis and continue to collaborate within the labor law where understanding between workers/employers and employers/factories owners is needed because the two sides are partners that need each other in order to make progress ...

The same is true for the Autonomous Sea Port of Sihanoukville where if the Port makes more money, workers will enjoy the benefit as well ...

Workers and factories owners are partners in their developments ... In Lenin's New Economic Policy he said workers will have difficulties if the capitalists are not making any progress. I would analyze his statement

that if the capitalists do not invest in factories, workers would not be able to find jobs or careers ...

In the cause of coming electoral campaign which starts tomorrow, I would urge our armed forces to do a good job serving the National Election Committee at all levels while guaranteeing a free, fair and just environment for the sub-national election to take place free from violence. Before and after the election date, we have to provide safety in the whole country especially all CPP committees' members must exercise patience and whatever is beyond authority's jurisdiction, please leave it for the judicial system and refrain from going into conflict. This is my appeal after which I will be silent ...

I also would like to appeal to all who use vehicles of all types to increase watchfulness in operating their means of transports because accidents caused by traffic are grisly and higher death rate everyday ...

We all have to respect traffic rules and no matter who you are you have to abide by law ... It is now also time that we have to take actions against those vehicles with military or police number licenses ... they should replace them or they will get fined and their vehicles would be confiscated for state property ...

I also urge those driving important persons' vehicles to drive within permitted speed ... and siren car should have certain rule to follow because the sound at a certain level would be disturbing patients in hospital or elderly who has insomnia ... ■

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and conserve some of the buildings too. NIE staff's efforts in sharing and transferring knowledge to new generations of teachers have been well taken and highly noted.

These efforts have been very useful as it has trained and retrained teaching staff before they are being sent back for teaching jobs. Today we have the graduation of teaching staff who attain bachelor degree plus one year of pedagogy and French language training. We have the 13th and 14th batch of teaching staff in training.

This has indeed reminded us of those who know more teach those who know less, and those who know little teach those who do not know. It was after the Pol Pot's regime which was the most difficult time for us. Upon being liberated from the Pol Pot's regime, our people had to keep one hands fighting the return of the genocide, while another to restore every fields that were in complete destruction and to cope with sanction that was imposed upon by the United Nations. The embargo meant development assistance was forbidden making our youngsters at that time studying under trees, in Buddhist monks' residences, and charcoal was used as chalk.

We have now come to a new and different stage of development as we started to globalize ourselves by integrating with the world without anymore sanction from anyone. We are also a member of the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, World Customs, etc. We have even fulfilled some international

obligations like sending demining teams to Sudan and are in the process of sending more to Chad and Central African Republic.

These steps of developments have allowed us more time to improve our country's education service in quality and quantity, in which number of students throughout the country has reached 3,4 millions together with increasing number of teachers to 106,300 ... This is starkly different to when we first started with only few teachers in 1979-1980, in addition to even less number of teachers of pedagogy left from the genocide. We have suffered multiple consequences in the field of education. Some efforts to make our people literate had failed because of what is called "literacy disremember" because after literacy campaign they do not have books to read or TV to watch as we do now, so they tended to disremember. This is our sad memory of what it was like.

HE Im Sothi, Minister for Education, has just reported that in 2007-2008, we have a graduation of 4,861 teachers for all levels of education. Among them, 488 graduates are to be distribute among universities. We also have pedagogical teachers who have been transferred from Phnom Penh's Pedagogical School to NIE to further train Bachelor + 1 professors and 12 + 1 for those who come from regional pedagogical schools ... And these efforts are made for all — male and female.

I have been accused and sued to have abused women when I made a remark which did not even specifically name any names. S/he felt my re-

mark meant on her/him and sued me for that in her/his generalization that I meant all women in the remark. I have now gathered sufficient proofs and evidences to sue the person of what was being said of me. It is not that I counterclaim but I bring a claim upon the person for her/his remark that discredits my honor ...

After making noises about what is to be "my wrong actions," and as soon as I decided to sue the person, those voices that initially support the person's claim have raised concerns and opted for no legal actions taken.

The person even threatened and challenged me for parliamentary immunity removal together with her/his. I am ready for that. However, the person should think of the two-third majority I have in the National Assembly. It is up to the Court to decide, if they see me committing any wrongdoings, they should request to the National Assembly for such immunity removal. As for me, I have no doubt that the two-third majority of the CPP in the parliament will not go her/his way. As for the person, I am sure it will be a piece of cake ... The person always back up her/his position by resorting to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) but I am also a member of parliament and I also have my honor to protect.

I was sued for 500 Riels in compensation for whatever cause the person may claim but I am suing the person for Riel 10 million and the money will go to orphanage centre. Now when I say those "ill-will politicians who reckoned no truth" ... they

may think I discredit them and they may think that they are the ones who do not reckon the truth for real. So, they may sue me on that too ... How dare the person link her/himself with women in the whole country, I also have my wife and my daughters and female members of the CPP too ...

All this have proven what a former parliamentarian Khem Viesna said "keeping scolding Hun Sen will make a person famous" ... Now you have it but I will get Riel 10 million for the orphans. The legal action will have to cover both persons in the press conference they conducted. In what count that the lawyer is in the press conference with the person?

I have to take this opportune moment to share with all of you and your loved ones my joy for the successes you have achieved in the course of your study and soon you will be going out teaching in various educational institutions. I think as the country's development has come to a better stage perhaps distribution of teachers to various provinces in the country will be easier in comparison to some ten years ago.

In 1986, I requested Takeo province to send some 100 teachers to Ratanakiri province (in the northeast) and about five or six stay there up to now. It was a hard decision to make in presence of malaria, Khmer Rouge's guerilla activities and in absence of road connections to Phnom Penh ...

As of the present, the province is well connected and traveling to Phnom Penh would not take four or five

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 days or via Vietnam as before but in few hours. We still have the section of national road 78 under construction from O Pong Moan to Baan Lung and soon we will have an agreement signed with the People's Republic of China on other national road 76 construction which soon we will have this area well connected by asphalted roads. Teachers who have to fulfill mission in Koh Kong province will also be there and from within four hours.

What is now the most important achievement of Cambodia is the fact that the whole country is under one control and the presence of no war has allowed our people to travel freely wherever they wish to. There have no longer been internal boundaries, beside which former warring factions filled them with mines ... So when we achieve peace in the whole country well connected infrastructure will add on to educational and healthcare facilities in place in local areas or communities ... these have made us different from before indeed.

However, my ambition has been far greater as I wish to focus on building more functional residences for teaching staff and this ambition has been fulfilled in some places like in Romeas Hek of Svay Rieng province by HE Pol Saron, Chief of General Staff and also by Bun Rany Hun Sen in Memot of Kompong Cham province where functional residences for teaching staff are provided ...

I usually say that an important criteria among all in order to have good teachers is to provide basic facility for living condition, residence

included. Teachers will choose your provinces if they see that you take care of basic facility for them ...

We have now stratified our development in a more even manner as in the forthcoming time the northeast region will become one of the strong economic poles and as you know Mondulhiri, Kratie, Stoeng Treng, with better road accesses will attract more teachers ... the local authorities should be wise as to look for land for cultivation for them as well. Giving priority to education, we have augmented more budget regularly whereas human resources development enjoys our special attention ...

Knowledge economy must be provided for all Cambodian citizens and that is why we have done everything we can to establish secondary school in all communes with the hope that we will be able to fulfill the mission by 2011 ...

Before and after 1979, in the whole province we have only one senior secondary school ... In Kompong Cham for instance before 1970, students who wished to pursue their education to senior secondary school level will have to come to the town of Kompong Cham and by after 1979, we still had one senior secondary school in the town. As of now we have more in all districts, with at least two each in Dambe and Memot districts, while others have more than two ...

As far as junior secondary school is concerned, by late 2011 we will achieve the target and more will help students from having to travel across rivers to

study... We should apply the Hun Sen theory in this matter by upgrading junior to senior secondary school by adding more buildings and providing more teachers ...

Having said so I would urge all to maintain school land property – at kindergarten, primary, secondary school and university levels – for future demand for more buildings to be built for educational purposes and I would deny categorically any assumption that so and so school has got so and so much of unused land ... Remember that in 30 years the Cambodian population have grown from about four millions to about 14 millions ...

So we need to have more good teachers ... Indeed we have started after the liberation with our bare hands and teaching was an activity in exchange for about ten different food and utensil items – ranging from rice, salt ... to soap, etc.

It has been a tightened-belt effort to be able to increase civil servants' salary for 20% per annum and it is not at all easy to do unlike so and so increase would be made by some irresponsible politicians ... We are not opting for collecting tax on land to just fulfill this wish ... Increase of salary will have to be implemented in accordance with the level of growth that the country has achieved ... Preaching irresponsibly is not my style ...

In addition to this I have some messages for our people as the world is being threatened by swine flu and its rapid spread if we compare to SARS or bird flu. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Min-

istry of Health have taken precautionary measures by raising our people's awareness and also by sending veterinaries to all country's entrance and exit points ...

However it has been noted that the disease is not being contaminated from eating pork, so I would urge our people not to refrain from eating pork completely as those who have contaminated with the disease in Mexico are 99% not pork eating ...

I have HE Cham Prasidh contact with HE Surin Pitsuwan, the General Secretary of ASEAN, to discuss the possibility of getting a common ASEAN mechanism to be prepared for the disease as we had done that with SARS while Thailand was under HE Thaksin, for which ASEAN had the participation from Hong Kong and China ... That is just an initiative proposed in the name of ASEAN to take up a common ASEAN approach to the matter while where to meet and who to meet will be another matter to decide. As the scale of the issue is rather big we should examine whether a meeting of such nature could make effective decision or should there be a meeting at a higher level. I support Thailand to host such a meeting ...

IN many countries, travelers have been stopped while finding out at point of entrance to be contaminated, where in Cambodia, I suggest the Ministry of Health will have to contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation immediately to inform them of nationals who have identified to be contaminated or

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Sudan, Angola, Chad, Zimbabwe, while as I said elsewhere we have decided to send our de-mining troops to Chad and Central African Republic in addition to those that are working in Sudan as an international contribution under the United Nations umbrella ...

How could we then send our troops to Chad if Cambodia is ranked as equal as Chad ... Some countries have been classified as better off (than Cambodia) while their countries are still at war, social upheavals. Is it an effort to thwart off investment influx into Cambodia? I think this is the question to ask.

Cambodia is not free from crisis but we are not as stupid to destabilize the country and to create political turmoil, thus losing its normal socio-economic process ... I do not think the Cambodian people are that stupid that when they know that there are economic hardships, instead of laboring harder, they take to the forest to wage war, if I may say as an example. One cannot tell as there can be countless of political risks ... Sometimes, demonstration brings about instability or a revolution ... But being in Cambodia, have they seen us preparing for all of those? Is it a political intention to block influx of investment into Cambodia?

I would like to inform you all that all projects have been implementing and we do not retreat from them, take for instance, all electric power stations developed with the Chinese assistance are to keep going, while roads and other infrastructure are to mention, as HE the Chinese Ambassador is here too, China has now played an ever bigger role, and I wish China

to be richer. I was once asked by President of Nikkei Company in Tokyo if China will become a threat being a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) ... I gave them a simple answer, to receive Chinese tourists or to accommodate Chinese refugees ...

IN our history when China was in difficult situation because of invasion from foreign countries, the Chinese had fled their countries and some have been living in Cambodia and some in other countries in Southeast Asia. So if about 20 million Chinese took refuge what kind of drama we all will have ...

But if we all make China a rich country and we all receive Chinese tourists, I think it would be better ... I would like to take this opportune moment to give my appreciation to the fact that Chinese tourists seem to increase in number as they have changed their tour destination because of economic difficulties from Europe to Asia, Cambodia included, which cost less ...

Further to that trade between China and ASEAN countries are for the benefit of the ASEAN countries more than for China itself because the ASEAN countries' volume of export to China is bigger than the volume from China to ASEAN ...

Again I met the President of Nikkei Company and he said to me Your Excellency's understanding is quite justifiable as China has now become a reality and it has given no threats to any country ...

Having said all this I wish to remind you that concerns have been expressed about China being member of WTO and it will be a stronger coun-

try economically leading to being strong in military and influential in politics ...

As for Cambodia, all projects are on the move and I would say there would not be major impacts ... As exports crisis is a normal experience as buyer countries suffer financial and economic difficulties making money scarce ...

What has been lost in our income is the tax on vehicles and I am sure the people of Cambodia know their situation full well that if they could not afford new cars, they would go for the ones of a lower prices. If we were to have no new car, we would not be dead as without rice ... and that situation is not existing here ...

They have thought of Madagascar as better than Cambodia, Guinea Bissau whose President had been assassinated to be better off, while Guinea has indeed requested to buy rice from Cambodia ... I have no intention whatsoever to discredit the two countries but the EI seems to have put Cambodia in a wrong position. What is the heck as they invite me to London only after they criticized me? The problem is if I should take the invitation or not and to respond to their letter or not?

Cambodia still benefit from a situation that its workers have not been entirely cut off from their farms because we just have factories while they still have their parents owning farms back in their native villages ... Our way of helping them is to increase, and we have incorporated in the budget law, spending in agricultural sector and more will be provided every year so that agriculture will accumulate more capital ...

What seems to be our concern here is if we are able to meet the millennium development goals in this state of economic downturn? Or should we re-adjust them? Given situation has been changed if we compared to the time when we set out objectives for the millennium ...

Will the United Nations re-adjust them, for example the time frame? Cambodia is also concerned that its objective of eliminating 1% of poverty every year will be affected as those who have been cleared off the poverty line might fall back again under it because of the situation ... but we do not anticipate political risk as is predicted by EI because the people of Cambodia do not see why that have to go back to war or social unrest ...

HE Ambassador of the United States of America, the other day brought a delegation of US-ASEAN business groups to see me and many have introduced their investment interests in Cambodia but can we ask if Cambodia is in this risk level, why should they come to us? The same is true with HE the Ambassador of Australia as we have cooperation in the field of Bauxite mining and they are in final stage of preparation ... no one has abandoned the project yet ...

Please do not take my response as a clash with EI but I just need to make sure that the country is being seen in an objective way that it does suffer in this financial and economic climate but to die from it is not what it is going to be ... We have all that the world needs and that is rice ...

We have a crisis now and it is how to sell out rice because we have too much in surplus

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The Cambodian soldiers as well as Thais do not wish to have lost their lives ...

However, as I said again and again, I do not wish to see this kind of incident happen at all and we all should try and make sense of what I have suggested that we must not expand conflict from the Preah Vihear area to other areas at all ...

Today HE Kun Kim is absent but according to report by the team shows that a vision would be fully and successfully implemented only when it is being steadfastly implemented ... We have resolved to do what we want to do here in a serious manner as we have to conduct mine searching and clearance once again in this area because we need to make sure that handicap soldiers would not be left vulnerable to a mine-infested environment ... or they and/or their children would stand to be victims ...

What we have done here has provided helps not only for about 200 families but also for about 100 households living nearby and those passerby ... yesterday I watched TV news program and I saw that taxi driver is pleased that a new road could do a lot of good for his business ... To be frank my ambition has been huge as I wish to build asphalted road through here ... But remember we have to go at the speed of a toad leap ...

My primary recommendations for developing this area is that the committee has to draw out a master plan as to where and what size of land should be reserved for hospitals and schools and I would

want the conjunction lines of three provinces – Kompot, Kompong Speu and Preah Sihanouk to have a junior secondary school, which not long later we will build a senior secondary school in same place ...

You may ask why I decided to move you here instead of keeping you at Kien Svay in Kandal province. It would not be a problem for you to stay there but my wife and I have noted that only a few have not got children, and it is they that we have to think of their future ...

The best we could think of helping them is to find them a place with a house built in their ownerships, only we will not give you the titles at this instance but a concession titles ...

The reason is not difficult to understand ... I wish to keep this land and house for you and I do not want you to sell it to others ... It is in this instance that I do not give you the titles just yet. If you were to have received your titles and after one or two years you sell them out, before long you will get back to previous hardship ...

So I have given all of you only the rights to make use of the land but not the titles yet ... If you were to sell it out I wanted you sell it for a good price ... However it is worth keeping for the sake of your children ... It has been a difficult moment when we first started because we had to mobilize a lot of people and engineering soldiers from various units – about 1,534 of them – to get on with building houses and basic infrastructure ...

In view of this my wife has

come out twice to review the construction and structure – as you know, in previous building plan, bathroom and kitchen are part of the main housing plan, and she made her recommendation to extend the roof of the house further back where bathroom and kitchen are under the extended roof ...

As far as infrastructure is concerned I have been reported that health clinic, school, village committee building, water distribution system, water reservoirs, electricity have all been put in place ... Taking this opportune moment I would like to thank a Japanese company from Kyoto for its assistance in energy provision ... It is indeed a motivating factor to see our people seem to be successful in fish farming which is a source of protein for their households and for local marketing activities ...

Having all basic needs in place, I am so happy to notice that in less than a year that you have moved out here, with helps of battalion 31, the bodyguard unit and engineering team of the Ministry of National Defense, our people have achieved a good number long-term plants aside from immediate cropping system ...

I would suggest HE Chan Sarun, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, to order a soil experiment and let us know what else can grow well on this type of soil in terms of long-term plants ... We already have here a tree nursery station which will be providing more fruit and long-term plants for the people ...

I have a strong belief that Cambodia has got its poten-

tial to help the people, as long as the objective is clear and correct ...

I told HE Chan Sarun to review land concession deals, if the concessions have not been properly implemented, and if we have a proper objective and social demand for it, we may have to convert those land in concession to people in need. The land belongs to people and we give it out to the people, we should not be worried of committing mistake ...

I used to be insulted even if I am the Prime Minister ... Some people called me the “the blind” because I have only one eye left ... We are physically handicapped but we are spiritually strong and capable ... and I have effectively proven that ...

My presence here today should be considered the inauguration ... You will have my assurance that what has started here will continue to go on and I will spare no efforts to provide further assistance ... I will have more projects relating to education as I foresee that your children and those of the people living within the area will need by 2010 to attend junior secondary school ...

Having established the secondary school here, it will be possible to move your children, who have to continue their study at Kien Svay, to study here and we may have to think about providing accommodation for teachers who will be dispatched here too ... For first group of medical staff and teachers who first came here have been provided both land and motorcycles ... ■

04 April 2009 [Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments]
Visit to the Handicap Development Zone at Koh Sla, Kompot

... My wife and I are so pleased to come back here once again after our last year visit on April 13, , a few hours before the New Year at the district of Kien Svay of Kandal province. Today, April 04 – my official date of birth - we meet once again. The date has its historical value intrinsically attached with me and every return I have devoted the day for social actions ...

Like today, we meet so as to look back together what we have done and how much improvements have you made in your living conditions ... By the way, I am sure that your children who are in pursuit of education higher than primary level, and who have yet to move here would have to try to accustom to similar condition and I hope they would find it agreeable too ...

I am aware that initially you might have sad feeling as you have to change your living environment from being packed in a centre together to living in a dispersed location which is an open space a bit far from the National Road as well ...

Having spent about one year in this condition I now tend to think that you are getting used to the new environment and setup ... One critical factor that helps you become accustomed to the condition is the fact that you have engaged actively in social and economic activities as a whole and for own household needs in particular ...

First of all, having seen all this, I would like to express my sincere thanks to efforts

made by HE Kun Kim and his team in making all this development possible ... HE Kun Kim is actually not present here today because of some border issue development ... There was a small clash at the border between two neighboring countries ... Thai Prime Minister Abhisit, Minister of National Defense and Chief of General Staff Anupong Paochinda said altogether that it is considered as an incident that might eventually happen because the two troops stay too close to each others ...

Still I do not want to see this kind of incident happen again and I have suggested many times that instead of releasing bullets on each other, why not resorting to releasing smoked or seasoned fish from the Cambodian side, while from the Thai side, fruits could be a good exchange ... The best way to prevent such incident from happen happening is perhaps both sides stay where they are ... Cambodia has defined clearly its borderline, any encroachment upon would result in being fired upon, because if the Cambodian troops were to do the same in return, they would be fired upon as well ...

We have considered it as incident and not a war ... I would also need to make some correction to what I have seen the running letters on CNN and Channel News Asia about two deaths of Cambodian soldiers ... that it was a wrong piece of information as there were no casualties on our side because we were in our positions to defend ourselves ...

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(Continued from page 5)
 carried the disease and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation will have to inform respective embassies about such cases involving their nationals and what should be appropriate measures to be observed ... We will wait for further information and evaluation from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Health before more serious measures be taken, while in some countries, Mexicans have been strictly forbidden from entering their countries ... We have been safe because of our precautionary measures. We are unsophisticated in terms of our ability to deal with the disease, but as in the case of SARS and bird flu, because we are proactive and cautious, we are not spiritually weak ...

(Continued from page 6)
 and we also have too much cassava and I have requested to Vietnam to buy up more from us and the Thai Trade Minister also came to find a way to break through but Cambodia in addition to all this has to be prepared to final products processing by itself before exporting.

I would call on Cambodians of all walks of life to act seriously in solving economic problem and to prove it is wrong the kind of prediction from such an organization ... I wonder if the Global Witness and EI are one of a kind ...

There was this comment that in Tumring Rubber plantation of Kompong Thom province there were not even a single rubber tree, and I returned my comment that yes not a single tree but thousands of hectares ... How come they classified

Another message is for our people to speed up rainy season rice cultivation as rain starts quite early this year. Rice cultivation to start early will help us deal with impacts from the world financial and economic crisis ... We have observed impacts on garment industry, tourism, construction, and investment flow, etc.

However, agriculture has in this state of being shown out to be opportunity that we have in stock a surplus from meeting an increasing demand for local food security and export ... It is time for us to take all efforts in speeding up cultivation and high yield will help us guarantee food security for the country and economic growth to a certain extent, ... We can go less oil but not without rice ...■

countries at war to be better off than Cambodia? But the importance is it is not up to what other people say – take for instance IMF predicted Cambodia in the first three months of this year will have growth of 0.5%, while ADB said Cambodia will get 2.5% for the same period – but it is up to what we are doing.

It is hard to exercise trade relations though as some countries have pursued strictly two policies – protectionism and subsidy – only they are disguised under hygiene criteria, for example. For Europe the deal seems to be better in agricultural products as long as they are organic. So we have to make efforts in producing organic products ... Exports from developed to developing countries seems to be comparable to water running off the hill top while on a reverse order like from foot hill back up top ...■